

2003 Report of Accomplishments

Washington State Conservation Commission

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Washington State Conservation Commission Accomplishments in 2003 - Summary

- *Developed Supervisor Leadership Training Program with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts to increase participation and involvement in regional, state, and national programs and issues.*
- *Raised awareness of open, public process, and improved service delivery by involving conservation districts and partnerships in policy evaluation and data coordination.*
- *Re-organization within agency to better serve the 48 local conservation districts and constituents.*
- *Completion of the Salmon Limiting Factors and Analysis ESHB 2496 on time and under budget.*
- *After four years, the Agriculture, Fish and Water negotiations resulted in an agreement for Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement the national buffer standard (391).*
- *Working with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts and Small Agency Client Services on more accurate and efficient reporting of activities by program funding and environmental benefit.*

Purpose and Mission

The Washington State Conservation Commission was created in 1939 with the passage of Chapter 89.08 Revised Code of Washington. Conservation Commission staff is directed by a ten-member board who represent landowners and farm operators, local conservation districts and state agencies. Currently the Commission has one vacant position.

Tracy Eriksen of St. John serves as WSCC Chair and represents the Eastern region.

James L. Peters of Shelton serves as WSCC Vice-Chair and represents the public interest.

Jaclyn Reid of Olympia represents the Western region

Lynn Brown of Ellensburg represents the Central region

Wade Troutman of Association of Conservation Districts

David Peeler of Dept. of Ecology

Lee Faulconer of Dept. of Agriculture

Bill Boyum of Dept. of Natural Resources

Ed Adams of the College of Ag at WSU

These Commissioners are responsible for establishing policies and procedures to ensure that the mission of the Conservation Commission “*to protect, conserve, and enhance the natural resources of the state by encouraging and supporting the voluntary cooperation of landowners and resource users,*” is fulfilled. This is done by providing leadership and resources to support locally governed conservation districts in promoting conservation stewardship and assisting citizens in implementing conservation practices.

Commission Staff Responsible for Commission Goals

Executive and Administrative: Mark Clark, Executive Director; Mary Anderson, Executive Assistant; Debbie Becker, Administrative Programs, and Marvin Johnson, Program Assistant.

Field Service Managers: Bill Broughton, Eastern Washington; Butch Ogden, Central Washington; Tom Salzer, Southwest Washington; and Stu Trefry, Puget Sound.

Grants Department: Cheryl Witt, Supervisor Grants Officer; Kristy McGuill, Grants Assistant; and Debbie Skogen, Grants Assistant.

Special Projects and Programs: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Debbie Becker; Jon Culp, Irrigation Efficiencies Program Coordinator; and Ray Ledgerwood, Program Coordinator.

Commission Meetings and Tours

- *Six regular Commission Meetings and three special Commission meetings were held during the year. During four of these meetings tours were held in the local areas providing the Commissioners the ability to see the projects and activities of the local conservation districts.*
- *A few of the notable actions during these 10 meetings included – approved funding for 350 grants to conservation districts; approved an interim staffing plan; adopted a dairy nutrient appeals process; approved budget package for Office of Financial Management taking into account both the JLARC and POG processes utilized by OFM.*

Specific Actions, Roles and Responsibilities of the Commission

- **Provide assistance** to 240 conservation district supervisors and 48 conservation districts statewide,
- **Process 1,600 grant** vouchers per fiscal year, ensuring accuracy, conformance to policies, objectives and applicable laws.
- **Inform** the state's 48 conservation districts of the activities and experiences of other conservation districts;
- **In concert** with the Secretary of State's Office, the Commission **processes boundary change requests** on behalf of conservation districts;
- **Facilitate cooperation** and collaboration of state, federal, regional, interstate and local public and private agencies – and secure their assistance – with conservation districts;
- **Develop OFM funding** packages and **administer funding** based upon results of legislative process;
- **Establishing guidelines and suitable controls** on the use of public funds, property and services by conservation districts.

Commission Communication – Good Governance & Government Efficiency

- *Raised awareness of open, public process, and improved service delivery by involving conservation districts and partnerships in policy evaluation and data coordination.*
- *Weekly telephonic meetings are held to promote communication with our partnerships.*
- *Publishing Commission Newsletter for distribution to partners.*
- *Instituted weekly electronic update of issues and vital meetings for Commission Members.*

Sustainability Plan – Government Efficiency & Best Practices

- *Completed an Agency Sustainability Plan.*
- *We participate in the recycling program within the Department of Ecology.*
- *By instituting the weekly update to Commission Members it reduces the size of the package of material necessary for copying and distribution to the Commissioners for their meetings.*
- *We are committed to the principles of sustainability in operations and procurement.*

Service Delivery

- *The annual Customer Service Survey has been sent to the district supervisors. Early indications show some measured improvement in satisfaction ratings.*
- *Re-organization within agency to better serve the 48 local conservation districts and constituents.*
- *The Commission staff promptly responded to 18 requests for fiscal notes from the Office of Financial Management based upon legislation introduced by the 2003 Legislature.*

Government Reporting – Government Efficiency & Best Practices

- *Completion of the Salmon Limiting Factors and Analysis ESHB 2496 on time and under budget.*
- *After four years, the Agriculture, Fish and Water negotiations resulted in an agreement for Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement the national buffer standard (391).*
- *Working with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts and Small Agency Client Services on more accurate and efficient reporting of activities by program funding and environmental benefit.*

The Power of Partnership

- **Locally governed Conservation District Board of Supervisors**
240 Elected and Appointed Supervisors – 48 Conservation Districts
- **Federal Agencies:** Forest Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Farm Services Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- **Conservation District Associations:** Washington Association of District Employees; National Association of Conservation Districts, National Conservation District Employees Association, National Association of State Conservation Agencies.
- **State Agencies:** The Governor's Office, Office of Financial Management and Small Agency Client Services, Legislature, Department of Information Services – Small Agency Initiative Program, Interagency for Outdoor Recreation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, Washington State University Cooperative Extension.